

The senior Democrat on this side of the aisle to the Committee on International Relations deeply regrets not being here because of a conflict of schedule. I am certain that the sentiments expressed earlier by the gentleman from New York is very much in order to the fact that this has been a very productive year for the Committee on International Relations.

I will say to the gentleman from New York that we have had our differences in principle, but it has never been on differences in personalities. I appreciate the leadership and certainly the fairness that he has given in this stewardship as chairman of this committee. I want the gentleman to know that.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to express the gratitude and appreciation of the Nation also to the two gentlemen from this side of the aisle on the committee, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. TORRICELLI], also the gentleman from Florida [Mr. JOHNSTON], who will also not be here next year due to retirement and other choices that they have made in their political careers. I certainly would like to commend them for their services that they have rendered as members, outstanding members of this committee.

I also want to recognize with appreciation the gentleman from Wisconsin whom I have had the privilege of working with closely on matters of international trade and some of the foreign policies that we have dealt with on this committee and certainly would like to wish him well because of his retirement. I want to express that on behalf of the members of this side of the committee.

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Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from California, given his profound statement and understanding of the seriousness of the problem here in the Baltic States, I think the provisions of this resolution are well in order, and I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to thank the delegate from American Samoa, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, for his kind remarks and for his willingness to take an active role continually throughout the consideration of the measures before our Committee on International Relations. We thank him for his involvement.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. EWING). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN] that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, House Concurrent Resolution 51, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The title of the concurrent resolution was amended so as to read: "Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of the Congress concerning economic development, environmental improvement, and stability in the Baltic region."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the subject of the measure just considered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

#### UNITED STATES NATIONAL TOURISM ORGANIZATION ACT OF 1996

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2579) to establish the National Tourism Board and the National Tourism Organization to promote international travel and tourism in the United States, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 2579

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

##### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "United States National Tourism Organization Act of 1996".

##### SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds that—

(1) The travel and tourism industry is the second largest service and retail industry in the United States, and travel and tourism services ranked as the largest United States export in 1995, generating an \$18.6 billion surplus for the United States.

(2) Domestic and international travel and tourism expenditures totaled \$433 billion in 1995, \$415 billion spent directly within the United States and an additional \$18 billion spent by international travelers on United States carriers traveling to the United States.

(3) Direct travel and tourism receipts make up 6 percent of the United States gross domestic product.

(4) In 1994, the travel and tourism industry was the nation's second largest employer, directly responsible for 6.3 million jobs and indirectly responsible for another 8 million jobs.

(5) Employment in major sectors of the travel and tourism industry is expected to increase 35 percent by the year 2005.

(6) 99.7 percent of travel businesses are defined by the Federal government as small businesses.

(7) The White House Conference on Travel and Tourism in 1995 recommended the establishment of a new national tourism organization to represent and promote international travel and tourism to the United States.

(8) Recent Federal tourism promotion efforts have failed to stem the rapid erosion of our country's international tourism market share.

(9) In fact, the United States' share of worldwide travel receipts dropped from a

peak of 19.3 percent in 1992 down to 15.7 percent by the end of 1994.

(10) The United States has now fallen to only the third leading international destination.

(11) Because the United States Travel and Tourism Administration had insufficient resources and effectiveness to reverse the recent decline in the United States' share of international travel and tourism, Congress discontinued USTTA's funding.

(12) Promotion of the United States' international travel and tourism interests can be more effectively managed by a private organization at less cost to the taxpayers.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this Act is to create a privately managed, federally sanctioned United States National Tourism Organization to represent and promote United States international travel and tourism.

##### SEC. 3. UNITED STATES NATIONAL TOURISM ORGANIZATION.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established the United States National Tourism Organization which shall be a private not-for-profit organization.

(b) ORGANIZATION NOT A FEDERAL AGENCY.—The Organization shall (1) not be considered a Federal agency, (2) have employees appointed without regard to the provisions of title 5, United States Code, governing appointments in the competitive service, and paid without regard to the provisions of chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of that title relating to classification and General Schedule pay rates, and (3) not be subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act or any other Federal law governing the operation of Federal agencies.

(c) IRS STATUS.—The Organization shall be presumed to have the status of an organization described in section 501(c)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 until such time as the Secretary of the Treasury determines that the Organization does not meet the requirements of such section.

(d) PURPOSE OF THE ORGANIZATION.—The Organization shall—

(1) seek and work for an increase in the share of the United States in the global tourism market;

(2) work in conjunction with Federal, State, and local agencies to develop and implement a coordinated United States travel and tourism policy;

(3) advise the President, the Congress, and the domestic travel and tourism industry on the implementation of the national travel and tourism strategy and on other matters affecting travel and tourism;

(4) operate travel and tourism promotion programs outside the United States in partnership with the travel and tourism industry in the United States;

(5) establish a travel and tourism data bank to gather and disseminate travel and tourism market data;

(6) conduct market research necessary for effective promotion of the travel and tourism market; and

(7) promote United States travel and tourism, including international trade shows and conferences.

(e) POWERS OF THE ORGANIZATION.—The Organization—

(1) shall have perpetual succession;

(2) shall represent the United States travel and tourism industry in its relations with international tourism agencies;

(3) may sue and be sued, make contracts, and acquire, hold, and dispose of real and personal property, as may be necessary for its corporate purposes;

(4) may provide financial assistance to any organization or association in furtherance of the purpose of the corporation;

(5) may adopt and alter a corporate seal;